

**COAL MINE FATALITY** – On February 20, 2015, a 29-year-old roof bolter helper with 3 years and 48 weeks of mining experience was killed when a piece of rock approximately 3 feet wide, 11½ feet long, and 3 to 16 inches thick fell and pinned him against the top of the drill canopy of a roof bolting machine. The roof bolting machine was positioned to install the next row of permanent supports when the accident occurred.



#### **Best Practices**

- Visually examine the roof, face, and ribs immediately before any other work is started in the area.
- Be alert to changing conditions, especially after activities that could cause roof disturbance.
- While under supported roof, perform sound and vibration tests where roof supports are to be installed.
- Establish in the roof control plan a bolt installation pattern that effectively supports the roof strata.
- Adequately support or scale down any loose roof or rib material from a safe location.
- Ensure that ATRS systems on all roof bolting machines are maintained in good working condition. Ensure the ATRS sets firmly against the mine roof, as specified by the manufacturer, before installing new roof supports.
- As much as possible, stay under the roof bolting machine's drill canopy when working in the area between the ATRS and the last row of permanent roof supports.
- Take additional measures when hazards associated with draw rock are encountered, such as mining shorter cuts and decreasing roof bolt spacing.

- When using roof screen, implement work procedures that incorporate positioning and securing the mesh from a safe location.
- Know and follow the approved roof control plan. Install and examine test holes regularly to check for changes in roof strata.
- Add additional supports at any indication of adverse roof conditions.

This is the second fatality reported in calendar year 2015 in the coal mining industry and it is classified as Fall of Roof or Back. As of this date in 2014, there was one fatality reported in the coal mining industry. At this time in 2014, there were no fatalities in this classification.